

Broadcast Digital TV Transition FAQs



February 17, 2009 is coming. Are you ready?

What is the broadcast digital television (DTV) transition?

The broadcast digital television transition is the government mandated transition requiring that all full-power broadcast TV stations (i.e. ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS, Univision, etc.) end broadcasting signals in analog and begin broadcasting in digital format starting on February 17, 2009.

Why is the federal government requiring this switch to digital television?

The switch from analog to digital broadcast is a transition that has been mandated by the Federal Government. The government is reclaiming the analog broadcast signals. Some of the reclaimed signals will be used to enhance communications for emergency service providers such as fire and police departments and allow for more broadband services.

Who will the broadcast digital transition (DTV) impact?

The broadcast digital transition will impact all consumers who have analog television sets that are not hooked up to a pay-service such as cable or satellite.

What do I need to do to prepare for the end of analog television broadcasting?

- If your television set is connected to cable or another video service provider, there will be no impact and your TV will continue to work.
- If you are a cable customer, but have some TVs in your house that use a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears", connect those TVs to cable.
- If you only use a rooftop antenna (rabbit ears) to get your TV signals, you will need to do one of the following:

1. Buy a digital-to-analog converter for each TV set and connect it to your current TV and antenna (\$40 government issued coupons are available by calling 1-888-DTV-2009 or visiting www.dtv2009.gov);
2. Buy a new digital TV and connect it to an antenna; or
3. Subscribe to cable or another video service provider.

What if all my TV sets aren't connected to cable or another video service?

If you have additional television sets not connected to cable or another video provider you will need to do one of the following:

1. Get those additional television sets connected to cable or another video provider by February 17, 2009;
2. Buy a digital-to-analog converter for each TV set and connect them to your current TV and antenna; or
3. Buy a new digital TV and connect it to an antenna.

How do I know if I already have a digital TV (DTV)?

Many digital television sets have labels that say "Integrated Digital Tuner," "Digital Tuner Built-In," "Digital Receiver," or "Digital Tuner," "DTV," "ATSC," or "HDTV" (High-Definition Television). If your TV has any of the above labels, you do not need a digital-to-analog converter box; however, you may still need an antenna for signal reception. For additional information, please visit www.dtv.gov.

Do all new televisions that are sold include built-in digital tuners?

No, not all new televisions include built-in digital tuners. Some retailers still carry older analog TV sets, but they have to post notices

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about TVs that won't display digital broadcast channels after the digital transition.

If I buy a new television, how can I ensure that it will receive digital signals?

When you are searching for a new television, look for "Digital TV" as part of the television's description. Less expensive sets say "Standard Definition Digital TV." Your local retailer may be able to provide you with additional information about TVs that receive digital signals.

Will I need a new antenna?

Most likely you will not need a new antenna. Most rooftop antennas will pick up digital television signals. If you only use rabbit ears (antennas), you may or may not be able to pick up the digital signal.

How do I request a digital-to-analog converter box coupon?

The \$40 government-issued coupons are available by calling 1-888-DTV-2009 or visiting www.dtv2009.gov. Each household is eligible for a maximum of two coupons. The coupons are available on a first-come, first-served basis and must be used towards approved converter boxes (a list of approved boxes will be sent to you with the coupon).

How long will it take to receive my coupon?

While you can apply for the converter coupon at any time, it may take a few weeks or months for them to reach you. You will be provided an estimated ship date when you apply for your coupons by calling 1-888-DTV-2009 or visiting www.dtv2009.gov.

How long do I have to use my government issued converter box coupon?

Coupons must be used within 90 days of the issue date.

What if my coupon expires before I use it?

You have 90 days from the coupons issue date to use the coupon. If the coupon expires before you have a chance to use it, you cannot re-apply for another coupon.

Where do I get a digital-to-analog converter box?

The digital-to-analog converters are sold at certified retail stores. Please visit www.dtv2009.gov for additional information about purchasing a digital-to-analog converter.

How much does a digital-to-analog converter cost?

Digital-to-analog converters are priced between \$50 and \$70.

Is the digital-to-analog converter box easy to install?

In general, you will need to connect the converter to your television set and your antenna. To watch a demonstration on how to set up your converter box visit...

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/digitalTV/DTVDemo.shtml>. You can also visit

<http://www.dtvtransition.org/downloads/convert-er-qsg.pdf>

Do I have to wait until after February 17, 2009 to watch digital television?

No, you do not need to wait until February 17, 2009 as more than 1,600 local stations broadcast digital content today. The Federal Communications Commission's website, www.dtv2009.org, has more information on digital television, or you can call 1-888-225-5322 (TTY: 1-888-835-5322).

If I want a new TV, will I have to buy a High-Definition TV (HDTV) to watch digital broadcast television after the transition?

No. The broadcast digital transition is a switch from an analog to a digital signal on any TV set. The transition is not related to high-definition. High-definition is a type of digital signal that requires a high-definition TV set.

Will I be able to use my VCR, DVD player, camcorder, or gaming console with a digital television set?

Yes, VCRs, DVD players, camcorders, and gaming consoles work with both analog and digital television sets.

I currently live in a community along the U.S. border. Will I be able to receive analog television channels from Canadian or Mexican TV stations?

Some consumers living along the U.S. borders with Mexico and Canada currently watch analog television programming broadcast over-the-air by Mexican and Canadian stations. Canadian TV stations will also transition from analog to digital broadcasting, but not until August of 2011. Mexico has begun its transition and will complete it in 2021.

Broadcast Digital Television

Helpful Links



February 17, 2009 is almost here!

The Digital Transition Coalition

The Digital Television Transition Coalition is composed of business, trade and industry groups as well as grassroots and membership organizations. The core mission of the Digital Television Transition Coalition is to ensure no consumer is left without broadcast television due to a lack of information about the DTV transition.

www.dtvtransition.org

1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is an independent United States government agency. The FCC was established by the Communications Act of 1934 and is charged with the successful implementation of the DTV Transition.

www.dtv.gov

1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

The U. S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. It is the Federal government agency in charge of administering the TV Converter Box Coupon Program. Between January 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, U.S. households can request up to two coupons worth \$40 each, while supplies last, to be used toward the purchase of up to two coupon-eligible converter boxes.

www.ntiadtvtv.gov or www.dtv2009.gov

866-296-1107

Comcast

Comcast is working to make this transition a smooth experience for our customers and for current over-the-air consumers. We want the transition to be a positive experience for consumers who do not want to increase their out-of-pocket expenses for video service.

www.Comcast.com/DTV